

Steve Westly California State Controller



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CONTROLLER WESTLY DELIVERS \$421,000 TO INNOCENT MAN JAILED FOR MURDER

Sacramento, September 24, 2003 – State Controller Steve Westly today personally delivered \$421,000 to Rick Walker, an East Palo Alto man who served 12 years in prison for a crime he did not commit.

“Mr. Walker is a hero who has never lost faith,” expressed Controller Westly. “He is a remarkable man, who has emerged from an unthinkable situation, to be an inspiration to us all.”

Earlier this year, Walker’s attorney, Alison Tucher of the law firm of Morrison and Foerster, convinced prosecutors that Walker was the wrong man. Walker was subsequently released due to Tucher’s persistence and devoted research and investigation into the allegations of Walker’s conviction.

“Alison is to be commended, not only for doing what’s right, but also for doing it for humanitarian reasons and not for a paycheck alone,” said Westly.

Following his release, Walker filed a claim with the Victim’s Compensation and Government Claims Board (Board), a California state agency, of which the Controller is a Board member. The Board pays restitution to those wrongly imprisoned and for financial losses suffered as a direct result of criminal acts.

Mr. Walker’s matter was heard before the Board at its September 19th meeting. The Board voted unanimously to award Mr. Walker \$421,000. Two months prior to the meeting, Controller Westly urged the Board to hear Mr. Walker’s matter at its meeting last week and after the meeting asked the Board to expedite the necessary paperwork so Mr. Walker receives his money immediately.

Controller Westly presented payment to Mr. Walker within 24 hours of receipt of claim for payment from the Board.

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